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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA  
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INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 0208  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0283

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 000053

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA (MONZ) AND EUR/ERA (GIAUQUE)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/14/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EU](#) [SY](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRIA DOES NOT FORESEE APPROVAL OF EU-SYRIA  
AGREEMENT IN NEAR TERM

REF: STATE 1985

Classified by: Economic-Political Counselor J. Dean Yap for  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) Polchief discussed reftel points January 14 with Wolfgang Lapuh, MFA Deputy Director for the Middle East and Africa. Lapuh agreed that the Syrian government (SARG) had "made promises but not done anything" to improve its standing with the EU. He said he does not expect the EU-Syria Association Agreement to be on the agenda for the January 26-27 GAERC, and does not foresee the EU taking any action on the Agreement unless the SARG changes its behavior. The decision to update and re-initial the Agreement was intended to make clear to the SARG that certain steps, such as naming an Ambassador to Lebanon and demarcating the Syria-Lebanon border, would be rewarded by the EU. Until the SARG follows through on its commitments, however, the EU has no intention of changing its stance, he said.  
GIRARD-DICARLO